

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 07583 262305Z

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SUBJECT: FONSEC RABASA'S PRESS CONFERENCE ON ECHEVERRIA'S
CANDIDACY FOR UN SECRETARY GENERAL

REF: MEXICO 6669; MEXICO 7053; MEXICO 7054; MEXICO 7086;
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1. SUMMARY: IN A PRESS CONFERENCE AUGUST 23, MEXICO'S FONSEC
EMILIO O. RABASA SAID THAT ALTHOUGH ECHEVERRIA WAS NOT CAMPAIGNING
TO BECOME UN'S SECGEN, HE HAD RECEIVED A GREAT DEAL OF SUPPORT
IN LATIN AMERICA, AFRICA, AND ASIA. ADDITIONALLY, RABASA SAID
THAT ECHEVERRIA WILL NOT CAMPAIGN FOR THE SECRETARY GENERALSHIP
UNTIL AFTER HE COMPLETES THE MANDATE GIVEN TO HIM BY THE MEXICAN
PEOPLE. WHILE THIS IS NOT AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF CANDIDACY, IT
ONLY FALLS SHORT OF BEING ONE ONLY BY A NARROW MARGIN. IN
ADDITION, RABASA PORTRAYED ECHEVERRIA'S RECENT TRIP TO 14 THIRD
WORLD NATIONS AS A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO DIVERSIFY AND STRENGTHEN
MEXICO'S FOREIGN RELATIONS AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO LATIN AMERICA
AND THIRD WORLD SOLIDARITY. RABASA ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD
DEPART MEXICO ON AUGUST 24 FOR LIMA WHERE HE WILL HEAD THE MEXICAN
OBSERVER DELEGATION AT THE NON-ALIGNED NATIONS CONFERENCE.
END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 07583 262305Z

2. UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERALSHIP: RABASA SAID THAT

ECHEVERRIA HAS NOT DONE "ANY CAMPAIGNING" FOR THE SECRETARY GENERALSHIP BUT, NEVERTHELESS, HAS RECEIVED "SPONTANEOUS ENDORSEMENTS...FROM THE NATIONS OF LATIN AMERICA, AFRICA AND ASIA." ADDITIONALLY, RABASA STATED THAT, "BEFORE CAMPAIGNING PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA WILL COMPLETE THE MANDATE WHICH THE PEOPLE (OF MEXICO) GAVE HIM, AND WILL DO SO EAGERLY AND IN NUMEROUS ACTIVITIES."

3. LEAVING NO DOUBT THAT ECHEVERRIA HAS GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO THE SECRETARY GENERALSHIP, RABASA CONTINUED: "AND I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEARLY AND CATEGORICALLY STRESSED THAT THE LEADER OF THIS COUNTRY WILL NOT DEFLECT THE DIRECTION OF HIS THIRD WORLD CONVICTIONS AND WILL NEVER CHANGE HIS POINT OF VIEW, WITH THE THOUGHT THAT HE MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT BECOME THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UN."

4. FINALLY, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER THE UNITED STATES OR THE SOVIET UNION CAN VETO ECHEVERRIA'S CANDIDACY, RABASA RESPONDED THAT HE HAS "NOT NOTED OPPOSITION FROM EITHER THE USSR OR THE UNITED STATES WITH RESPECT TO THIS SUBJECT."

5. ECHEVERRIA'S RECENT TRIP TO 14 THIRD WORLD NATIONS: IN ADDITION TO DISCUSSING ECHEVERRIA'S POSSIBILITIES FOR BECOMING SECRETARY GENERAL, RABASA ALSO DISCUSSED AND PRESENTED A LONG REPORT ON ECHEVERRIA'S TRIP AT THE SAME PRESS CONFERENCE. WHILE THIS REPORT CONTAINS NOTHING NEW OR SURPRISING, IT DOES STRESS THAT THE BASIC PURPOSE OF THE TRIP WAS "TO FORTIFY THE NATION'S (MEXICO'S) ROLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THUS AID AND ACCELERATE ITS INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT." THIS SUGGESTS THAT THE GOM IS SENSITIVE TO AND FEELS A NEED TO ANSWER SOME RECENT CRITICISMS ABOUT THE LENGTH AND EXPENSE OF THE TRIP, LARGE SIZE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL PARTY, AND THE ALLEGATIONS THAT THE COUNTRY DOES NOT BENEFIT FROM IT. RABASA'S REPORT ASSERTS THAT ECHEVERRIA'S TRIP DIVERSIFIED MEXICO'S FOREIGN RELATIONS, THEREBY ENHANCING ITS INDEPENDENCE, AND RESULTED IN THE SIGNING OF 27 BILATERAL AGREEMENTS. IN ADDITION, THE REPORT CLAIMS THAT IMPORTANT CONTRIUTIONS TO LATIN AMERICAN INTEGRATION AND SOLIDARITY, TO THIRD WORLD SOLIDARITY, AND TO STRENGTHENING THE UN. IT NOTES THAT ECHEVERRIA RECEIVED SUPPORT FOR HIS PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NEW THIRD WORLD ECONOMIC ORGAN AND ALSO FOR THE THIRD WORLD UNIVERSITY WHICH WILL OPEN SOOON IN MEXICO.

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 07583 262305Z

AMONG THE POSITIONS TAKEN VIS-A-VIS THE UNITED NATIONS, THE REPORT NOTES THAT ECHEVERRIA CAME OUT IN FAVOR OF "STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH ITS RESOLUTIONS AND RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSALITY."

6. DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND TRAVEL: RABASA ALSO REVIEWED GOM EFFORTS TO EXPAND AND DIVERSIFY ITS FOREIGN RELATIONS. NOTING THAT WHEN ECHEVERRIA TOOOK OFFICE, MEXICO HAD DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH 66 NATIONS, RABASA SAID THAT DURING THE PRESIDENT'S

FIRST FOUR AND ONE-HALF YEARS IN OFFICE, THE GOM ESTABLISHED RELATIONS WITH 31 NATIONS AND IS CURRENTLY CONSIDERING ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH 30 ADDITIONAL NATIONS. HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT ECHEVERRIA HAS VISITED 36 NATIONS AND MET WITH 64 HEADS OF STATE.

7. NON-ALIGNED NATIONS CONFERENCE IN LIMA: RABASA ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD PERSONALLY ATTEND THE CONFERENCE AND "THAT MEXICO WOULD DO WHATEVER IT COULD (AT THE CONFERENCE) IN ORDER THAT THE ECONOMIC BLOCKADE OF CUBA MAY BE DEFINITELY LIFTED." (PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT ANOTHER MEXICAN CABINET OFFICER, FRANCISCO ALEJO, SECRETARY OF NATIONAL PROPERTIES, WILL ALSO ATTEND THE LIMA CONFERENCE.)

8. COMMENT: WHILE ECHEVERRIA'S CANDIDACY HAS ONLY ATTRACTED A FEW PUBLIC ENDORSEMENTS TO DATE (SEE REFTELS), WE FEEL THAT RABASA'S STATEMENTS (PARAS 2-4) ARE AN INDICATION THAT BEHIND THE SCENES ACTIVITIES ARE PROGRESSING SATISFACTORILY FROM GOM VIEWPOINT.
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